



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

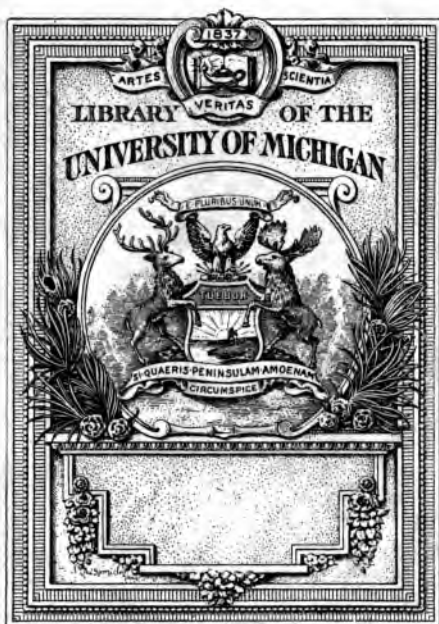
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

.L515
cop.2

Books for the People

HENRY E. LEGLER.

MILWAUKEE, WIS.
1908





Books for the People

Z
665
.L5,
cop.

b
Henry E. Legler
HENRY E. LEGLER.
11

MILWAUKEE, WIS.
1908

LD

Books for the people

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

© 107098.S.

Traveling Libraries.

FOLLOWING in the wake of the great public library movement, which in less than two decades has dotted the cities of the United States with buildings that house millions of books for the people, came systems of traveling libraries. The institutions which Jenkins Lloyd Jones satirically terms Carnegeries provide city dwellers with an amplitude of reading material, but there was until a few years ago no provision for similarly meeting the greater needs of the isolated persons living remote from centers of population—in thousands of little hamlets, in mining and lumber camps, in uncounted farmhouses.

Just fifteen years ago, Mr. Melvil Dewey, then state librarian of New York, ever foremost in progressive library work and originator of most of the far-reaching methods for making public libraries useful and efficient, solved the problem which had bothered many thinkers on the subject: How to give country people access to collections of books selected by experienced and educated buyers, and

4-13-20

182610

how to renew these collections so as to keep a fresh and plentiful supply on hand at all times. Mr. Dewey's solution of the problem was absurdly simple. Anybody could have thought it out without effort—but, nobody else did. It was this: From a centrally administered library, groups of books carefully selected so as to comprise fifty or sixty volumes each, were packed into suitable boxes or cases, and sent to small villages, country school-houses and centrally located farmhouses to be distributed to the neighborhoods on the same plan as books are given out from branch stations in cities. At the end of six months, the books would be gathered by the custodian, shipped back to the central distributing agency, and a fresh lot would take their place. By this simple and economical method the people of these little neighborhoods would secure an opportunity to read the best and most interesting books without financial burden.

"In the work of popular education," said Melvil Dewey pertinently, "it is, after all, not the few great libraries, but the thousand small that may do most for the people."

In fifteen years, the first little chest of books that went upon its travels has multiplied to more than 5,000. Probably a third of a million books are now constantly "on the go" in this fashion. Fig-

ures are available for only twenty-two of the states, and according to these the circulation for the states enumerated was 600,443 books last year. It must be remembered that for a few years after the plan was transplanted from New York to other states, private contributions were the only reliance for maintaining the systems of traveling libraries. It is only within the last half dozen years that the demonstration of their usefulness prompted state legislatures to make appropriations for this purpose, to enable state library commissions to extend this great work on a liberal scale. The ease with which the traveling libraries may be adapted to meet various needs may be shown in a rapid summary compiled by Mr. F. A. Hutchins, who has been one of the leading promoters of them in this state:

Some women in New Jersey have used them to lighten the long winter days and evenings of the brave men who belong to the life-saving service, and that state has now taken up the traveling library as a definite part of the work of its state library; other women, in Salt Lake City, send them regularly to remote valleys in Utah; a number of state federations of women's clubs use them to furnish books for study to isolated clubs; Mrs. Eugene B. Heard of Middleton, Ga., is devoting herself to the supervision of an

admirable system which reaches a large number of small villages on the Seaboard Air Line in five southern states; an association in Washington, D. C., puts libraries on the canal-boats which ply on the Washington and Potomac Canal in the summer and "tie-up" in small hamlets in the Blue Ridge Mountains in the winter; the colored graduates of Hampton Institute carry libraries to the schools for their own people at the base of the Cumberland Mountains, while to the "mountain whites" libraries are sent by women's clubs in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama. In Idaho, California, Nebraska, Kansas, Illinois, Missouri, Minnesota, and many other states, women's clubs are doing the same work for miners, lumbermen, farmers, and sailors. The people of British Columbia and New Zealand are successfully imitating their American cousins in this work. In Massachusetts, where nearly every community has its public library, the Woman's Educational Association is doing a most helpful work by using traveling libraries to strengthen the weak public libraries in the hill towns.

Of all the states of the Union which reported on traveling libraries last year, Wisconsin stood first with a circulation of 122,093. Wisconsin was the third state to adopt this method for bringing wholesome books to people in the country. This was in 1895. The Free Library

Commission has charge of 563 of these little libraries, which are sent to stations scattered all over the state, and are exchanged every six months. Each group contains books of history, travel, fiction, biography, useful arts, and miscellaneous literature so proportioned as to meet the needs of the average community as determined by experience. The Wisconsin Commission also sends to communities where there are many persons of foreign birth, the best literature in their own tongues. In some sections of the state, people go ten to twenty miles at regular intervals to secure these books. The Commission also makes up study libraries for the use of clubs engaged in serious study. The topics deal with English literature, art, history, village and town improvement, questions of the day, etc.

The traveling libraries in Wisconsin now reach 62,000 persons. The city libraries in Wisconsin permit the privilege of drawing books to 25,000 persons living in the country in their neighborhoods in addition to the 866,000 persons who reside within their municipal limits. There remain, after all, more than a million and a quarter of the population absolutely without access to library privileges. These figures suggest the work that remains to be done.

The history of the traveling libraries in Wisconsin is summarized in a current number of the *Library Bulletin*, a periodical issued by the Wisconsin Free Library Commission:

Scarcely a month after the organization of the Commission in December, 1895, Senator James H. Stout, of Menomonie, began to make plans for a system of traveling libraries for his home county, for which he proposed to bear all expenses, leaving the details of the work to the Commission. Five hundred volumes were purchased, which were divided into sixteen libraries. Before the libraries were ready for circulation, applications were on file for all of them and ten more were immediately purchased, which were as eagerly seized upon. At the present time thirty-four libraries are in circulation in Dunn County.

In June, 1896, Mr. J. D. Witter, of Grand Rapids, asked the assistance of the Commission in working out plans for a system of traveling libraries in Wood County. Beginning with fifteen libraries, Mr Witter gradually increased the number until thirty-two boxes had been purchased. Upon this benefactor's death, it was found that he had left an endowment fund of \$5,000 for the perpetuation of the system.

Mr. W. H. Bradley, of Tomahawk, authorized the Commission to purchase

750 volumes, 500 of which were given to the city of Tomahawk, the remaining volumes being divided into five traveling libraries for surrounding towns.

Mr. Joseph Dessert, of Mosinee, sent his cheque for \$500 to the Commission, to be expended for traveling libraries for the state at large; and Senator Stout, Mr. Witter, J. M. and T. J. Pereles, of Milwaukee, and others gave to the same fund, while Levi Withee, of La Crosse, E. P. Arpin, of Grand Rapids, W. J. Starr, of Eau Claire, and others contributed for special localities. Many citizens, teachers' and school associations and clubs gave the means to buy one or more libraries, while others donated books and cases. The *Milwaukee Sentinel* and *Journal* were most liberal in this particular. A number of citizens of Milwaukee and D. L. Plumer, of Wausau, gave money wherewith to purchase German traveling libraries. A number of towns raised \$50 for the purchase of one traveling library, thus making them a link in the chain of such libraries in the state. In other instances, through the incentive offered by a free traveling library, communities established public libraries. In 1903, a law was passed by the legislature which amended the Commission law through the establishment of a department of traveling libraries, and making an appropriation therefor. The Com-

mission is now supplying five hundred stations and is constantly increasing the number of its libraries. In addition to its English libraries, it owns libraries or groups of German, Norwegian, Polish and Bohemian books. Vast quantities of periodical literature, donated by the people of the state, have been sent out with the traveling libraries.

A contract has recently been entered into with the State Board of Control whereby the Commission supplies the state penal and charitable institutions with traveling libraries. It is hoped to extend this plan to include county institutions as well.

Each box of books sent to a station is accompanied with little catalogues for distribution.



Public Libraries.



FIFTEEN years ago there existed within the fifty-six thousand square miles of Wisconsin a mere handful of starveling public libraries, and only in three or four of the larger cities were these institutions properly housed. Most of them existed from force of habit rather than from action. But one library in the state employed trained service. There were no traveling libraries. The school district libraries had scarcely made a beginning, so that even that source failed to supply wholesome books for the use of the people. Here and there a volunteer fire department gathered a bundle of books, or a literary society would secure a similar collection from the attics of its members. Naturally, such efforts resulted in dismal failures. Ninety per cent of the population was absolutely without public library facilities.

But fifteen years ago, and now! Scattered all over the state, in cities and villages and hamlets, are to be found modern, up-to-date public libraries in charge

of alert, trained, interested librarians, eager and active in extending the radius of their influence or helpful in every way to promote the interests of the community and of every individual in it. There are now 152 public libraries in Wisconsin. Sixty-one of them occupy buildings erected especially for them, and 28 others have quarters in city halls or other public buildings. Many of them have a children's department, with trained library workers in charge of the specialized activities there conducted. In the larger buildings, lecture halls are an adjunct, where it is possible to provide university extension and similar lectures, and where women's study clubs, young men's debating societies and similar groups of persons find hospitable meeting places for carrying on their work. Work with schools is carried on to an extent, and to a profitable degree, little imagined as possible in the early days of the library extension movement. Free access to shelves is now permitted in every library of the state except one.

There are now some forty librarians in Wisconsin who come from library training schools, and of the other librarians and assistants employed, approximately 100 have attended the summer school conducted by the Wisconsin Free Library Commission. The growing importance of the relation between library

and school is evidenced by the fact that library instruction is now part of the course in every one of the seven normal schools, and a professional school for training librarians, with a staff of picked instructors, is maintained at Madison by the state. The candidates for admission are selected by competitive examination, and with special regard to suitability for the work by reason of temperament, education, address and experience.

Libraries have multiplied at such a rate—especially within the past five years, that there remains but one city with a population in excess of 3,000 unprovided with a library—Prairie du Chien. A year ago there was another city in this class—Sturgeon Bay. There the leading citizens bestirred themselves, and a unique campaign of education and of effort resulted. The local papers printed a large map of Wisconsin showing the location of all the public libraries, and printed in flaring headlines above it: "Put Sturgeon Bay upon the Map." Sturgeon Bay is certainly on the map now, for it has a well-administered library.

There remain but 12 cities having more than 1,500 inhabitants which are unprovided with public libraries. Of the smaller places, 1,000 to 1,500 population, in many of which ability to properly support an institution of this kind is

doubtful, there are now but 29. It will be seen, therefore, that the city dwellers are fairly well provided with access to wholesome books. If the statistics compiled by the national government are accurate, the average number of books per each 100 of the population is 58. These figures, like most bare statistical summaries, are apt to be misleading as to general conditions. There is no doubt that 900,000 persons who constitute the urban population, are well-supplied with books. In Milwaukee, for instance, the volumes will average 50 to the 100 population. In Fond du Lac, every man, woman and child resident there could borrow a book, and still leave about 8,000 volumes on the shelves. In La Crosse, when the children's department was installed a couple of years ago, the juvenile population showed such appreciation of the opportunity that every book available was taken out the first week. This fact stimulated generous money gifts from citizens (Mrs. Pettibone has recently given an additional gift of \$5,000 for the purchase of children's books). At Stevens Point, there are 5,799 books, and 4,965 borrowers, the collection of less than 6,000 volumes having a circulation of 68,000 annually. And there are but 10,000 people in that city. From these few cases cited, it will be seen that conditions differ greatly in the several cities of the state.

On the whole, the cities are fairly well provided. In the rural regions, however, the provision is very inadequate. The 30,000 books sent to 400 traveling library stations do not supply the need. There are doubtless a million residents who have access to no libraries except those they may have in their own homes, and no doubt in hundreds of homes the possession of books is limited to those used by the children in their classes at school. There are now in the hundreds of local district school libraries approximately 900,000 volumes. Many of these are in sets of ten to thirty of each book used, and are not used outside the school buildings. Under the state law, there is annually expended for township libraries, 10 cents for each child between the ages of 4 and 20, about \$60,000 per annum being raised by taxation in this manner. None of this money goes to public libraries. For the latter, the sum raised by taxation is determined by each community for itself. The total receipts for current maintenance of public libraries is now about \$200,000.

II.

Naturally, the activity of the public library movement in recent years, with consequent multiplication of institutions, has attracted the attention of thoughtful men and enlisted the cordial aid of pub-

lic-spirited individuals. Philanthropists have found therein an avenue for their benefactions yielding undoubted results. Many wealthy men, instead of rearing to their own honor shafts of stone or images in bronze, have taken the wiser and happier method of securing an enduring monument in the form of a public library. The sum of \$1,299,500 represents individual gifts for library buildings in this state, \$492,000 of this princely sum having been contributed by citizens of the respective communities where such memorial libraries have been erected. Andrew Carnegie has given Wisconsin libraries \$807,500 for buildings. There are now living a number of wealthy men who have provided in their wills for suitable bequests whereby buildings of this character may be erected in the places which they make their home, and similarly others have provided endowments for their home libraries to come out of their estates. Thus does one good deed suggest another.

The library buildings that have resulted from gifts or bequests of Wisconsin citizens are the following:

Beaver Dam, \$25,000 from J. J. Williams.
Delavan, \$15,000 from the Aram estate.
Evansville, \$10,000 from A. Eager.
Janesville, \$10,000 from Eldred estate, in addition to a Carnegie gift.
Kenosha, \$150,000 from Z. G. Simmons.
La Crosse, \$17,500 from C. C. Washburn, and

\$25,000 from five citizens, whose names are not made public.

Lake Geneva, \$7,000 from Mrs. Geo. Sturges.

Lake Mills, \$8,000 from L. D. Fargo.

Marinette, \$30,000 from Isaac Stephenson.

Menasha, \$20,000 from E. D. Smith.

Menomonie, \$125,000 from Andrew Tainter.

Monroe, \$12,500 from H., E. and W. Ludlow.

Mosinee, \$5,000 from Joseph Dessert.

Neenah, \$15,000 from citizens, in addition to a Carnegie gift.

Oconomowoc, \$4,500 from residents.

Oconto, \$15,000 from George Farnsworth.

Oshkosh, \$55,000 from Philetus Sawyer and the Harris estate.

Stanley, \$15,000 from Mrs. Sally F. Moon.

Two Rivers, \$4,000 from citizens.

Waukesha, \$3,000 in addition to a Carnegie gift.

Waupun, \$1,000 from the Beach estate, in addition to a Carnegie gift.

Wausau, \$10,000 from citizens, in addition to a Carnegie gift.

Wausaukee, \$4,500 from H. P. Bird.

Wauwatosa, \$5,000 from citizens, in addition to a Carnegie gift.

Whitewater, \$15,000 from Flavia White.

III.

Much of the credit for the great library expansion in the state witnessed within this comparatively brief period is due to the wisdom of the Free Library Commission, with Senator Jas. H. Stout at the head, and to the intelligent activity of their executive officers, especially Mr. Frank A. Hutchins and Miss Lutie E. Stearns in meeting difficult pioneering conditions with unequalled enthusiasm

and courage; and Miss Cornelia Marvin in organizing the scattered material into consistent and methodical working institutions. The impulse given the library movement by the distribution of Mr. Andrew Carnegie's donations must likewise not be overlooked. There are 36 library buildings in the state built in whole or in part with money given by Mr. Carnegie.

The activity of the Free Library Commission has not ceased since it received its splendid initial impulse. Its work may be briefly summarized as follows:

Supervision. Works for the establishment of public libraries in localities able to support them.

Visits libraries for the purpose of giving advice and instruction.

Collects and publishes statistics of libraries for the guidance and information of trustees.

Prints a bi-monthly bulletin, news notes and suggestions to keep librarians and trustees informed in regard to library progress throughout the state.

Gives advice and assistance in planning library buildings and collects material on this subject for the use of library boards.

Instruction. Aids in organizing new libraries.

Assists in reorganizing old libraries according to modern methods which insure the best results and greatest efficiency of the library.

Conducts a school for library training for the purpose of improving the service in small libraries.

Holds institutes for librarians to instruct those who cannot attend summer school.

Traveling Libraries. Maintains a system of traveling libraries which furnishes books to rural communities and villages too small to support local libraries, and to larger villages and towns as an inducement to establish free public libraries.

Aids in organization and administration of county traveling library systems.

Clearing House. Operates a clearing house for magazines to build up reference collections of bound periodicals in the public libraries of the state.

Document Department. Maintains a document department for the use of state officers, members of the legislature and others interested in the growth and development of affairs in the state, and catalogues and exchanges state documents for the benefit of public libraries.

Book Lists. Distributes a suggestive list of books for small libraries to insure purchase of the books in the best editions.

Issues frequent buying lists of current books to aid committees in securing the best investment of book funds.

Compiles buying lists on special subjects or for special libraries upon request.

IV.

It must not be supposed, because the great library growth has been manifested in the last decade, that there were wanting prior to that period interested men and women hopeful and active to give impulse for like conditions. Away back in 1840, when Wisconsin was a frontier

territory ambitious to advance to statehood, the council and assembly enacted a law to encourage subscription libraries. A public library supported by taxation, was not then dreamed of, for there was then none in the entire United States, nor for ten years thereafter. It is interesting to note that in these territorial days, the little hamlet of log houses known as Madison enjoyed the advantages of a library open to all who cared to use it. It was the private library of the governor, James Duane Doty, which he threw open to the public. Col. Geo. W. Bird, in his account of it, says that it contained about five hundred volumes of a general historical, educational and literary character and a number of the best maps known at that time. It was housed in the Governor's private office, which was a small one-story frame building of one room situated among the trees in the little backwoods town. The books were arranged in low shelving around the sides of the room, and the scanty furniture, consisting of a small desk, a deal-board table, three or four chairs, a pine bench, and a register in which to enter the taking and returning of books, completed the equipment.

Over the shelving on the westerly side of the room, was this direction, painted in black on a white field: "Take, Read

Z
365
L515

sp. 2

Legler

Books for the people

.....
182610

[illegible]